

universalist, relatively to the particularist Judaism which it superseded.

Such movements, exemplifying more or less fully the principle of universalism, aim at the saving of the world or perfecting of the universe. In science, such a thinker as Wilhelm Bölsche elaborates this idea. He shows in the last chapter of his *Liebesleben in der Natur* how the principle of universalism may work out. In religion, while we recognize the claims of the particularist Christianity upon conduct, as of immediate importance, we should not forget that every period of Christian history has produced thinkers and theologians who have perceived the further, universalist, significance of the Christian idea held in its fullness; and who by *a priori* reasoning, biblical exegesis, and other intellectual means, have striven to illustrate and present that aspect of the idea.

The Council of the *Eugenics Society* may prefer preserving an attitude to formulating a policy, in relation to religion. If it does feel called on to formulate a policy, I suggest that such a policy should rather approach Christianity than diverge from it; for while I am, *qua* scientist, a nobody, and *qua* Christian, a very imperfect one, yet I know enough both of the eugenist movement and of militant Christianity, to see that they have much in common; and I anticipate that both these great particularist movements, when they have done all that they are meant to do for the good of the world, will be superseded by, and absorbed into, a vaster universalist movement. The principles of this latter movement are implicit in Christianity—a fact which we acknowledge when we give to the Christ the title, Saviour of the world.

H. NORTHCOTE.

46 Augusta Street, Redcliffs, Canterbury,
New Zealand.

Family Endowment

To the Editor, Eugenics Review

SIR,—In your January issue you were good enough to commend to the attention of your readers the proposals of the Family Endowment Society for the introduction of a system of Family Allowances into the teaching profession. At the same time you suggested that many of our publications dealt with schemes "designed to relieve only the poorest of the poor—dysgenic agencies which must arouse the whole-hearted opposition of eugenists."

"The poorest of the poor" already receive a form of Family Endowment in the dependents' allowances granted under Unemployment Insurance and Poor Law Relief; but it is true

that a good deal of our propaganda has been concerned with schemes confined to the wage-earning classes as a whole or to particular sections of them.

The economic arguments for spreading the cost of rearing the next generation are the same whether we apply them to the higher grades of the Civil Service or to coal miners. In the first case the financial burden of child dependency means unpleasant and often socially undesirable economies in the things which the middle classes have come to regard as necessary to a civilised life. In the second case it very often means a period of short commons in the matter of house-room, clothing and food which is likely to leave a permanent mark on the minds and bodies of those who experience it during the formative years of childhood. Many who believe most strongly in Family Endowment do so admittedly because, like Sir William Beveridge, they regard it as "the best step now possible to prevent avoidable poverty."

Such a proposal, you say, must arouse the whole-hearted opposition of eugenists. Why? Presumably because they fear a resulting increase in the birth rate among the least desirable sections of the population. It is, of course, impossible to dogmatise in a region where so many tangled motives meet, but there are certain considerations which seem to point away from this assumption.

In none of the concrete schemes so far proposed has the amount of the allowances been sufficient to cover more than a part of the cost of maintenance; the production and rearing of children would not become a paying concern. By lessening the economic motive for family limitation such allowances might tend to increase the birth rate *where it is already artificially low*, but among the lowest-paid classes in the community where the technique of limitation is scarcely known and where the prudential motive does not operate, they could scarcely have that effect. The determining factor here is surely to be found not in economic motives but in economic conditions. A system of Family Allowances which would save families from the worst degradation of poverty where hope and foresight are obliterated, which would increase the self-respect and independence of the mother and which would make possible better housing conditions, might be expected to have the same reactions as any other improvement in the standard of living in reducing the fertility of the classes affected by it.

MARJORIE E. GREEN,
Secretary.

Family Endowment Society,
52 Romney Street, S.W.1.